

Briefing Note for the Northstowe site- wide master plan and outline application for first phase of Northstowe

Northstowe Planning Application

An outline planning application for Phase 1 of Northstowe has now been submitted and copies of the application delivered to the County Council.

The application is for:

Up to 1,500 dwellings, a primary school, a mixed-use local centre (including a community building and shops), leisure, community, residential institutions, cultural, health and employment provision, a household recycling centre, formal and informal recreational space, and associated infrastructure works.

In addition, a Development Framework has also been submitted. This covers the entire Northstowe site and will provide a policy framework within which the Phase 1 application will be determined. Although it has been given a reference number (S/0390/12) the Development Framework will not be determined as a planning application.

The planning application and Development Framework should be able to be viewed on South Cambridgeshire District Councils website. Go to the following page and enter S/0388/12* to view the application or S/0390/12* to view the Development Framework (<http://plan.scambs.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display>). However, South Cambs officers have warned that this may not be on the website till later in the week.

The planning application will be determined at a future Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee (date to be confirmed).

Yours

County Councillor John Reynolds

Cllr Reynolds is a member of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee (NJDCC).

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### **Background.**

2.1 In July 2007 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) adopted an Area Action Plan (NAAP) for up to 10,000 homes at the site of a new town to be called Northstowe, adjacent to the villages of Longstanton, and Oakington. The Local Development Framework, particularly the Core Strategy, Development Control Policies & Northstowe Area Action Plan (NAAP) remain pertinent.

2.2 In December 2007 an outline application for the new town was submitted by the Joint Promoters Gallagher Longstanton and English Partnerships together with three detailed applications for strategic drainage infrastructure and road links to the new town from the Bar Hill and Dry Drayton Road junctions of the A14. On 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008 the Council wrote to the Joint Promoters, detailing areas where changes to the applications would be required or further information was necessary. In December 2008, following a series of meetings with the Joint Promoters, the Council issued two further letters reiterating the Council's position. These applications remain undetermined.

2.3 In December 2008 the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) was created from a merger of English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, and from 2009 to 2010, the HCA and Gallagher were negotiating arrangements for the development of Northstowe. Since then, the HCA and Gallagher agreed to continue to work together as Joint Promoters of the Northstowe development and formalised their commitment to work together to bring forward Northstowe by signing a partnering agreement in February 2011.

2.4 In October 2010, the Government removed funding for major A14 improvements. In response Gallagher produced a delivery paper for Northstowe (December 2010), proposing a phased approach to the delivery of Northstowe. This included a first phase development, to the north of the core area, which it believes could proceed without major improvements to the A14

2.5 Since 2011 officers from SCDC and Cambridgeshire County Council have been working closely with the Joint Promoters and The Northstowe Parish Forum to bring forward Northstowe. The work has included a review and refresh of the site wide masterplan, involving a design workshop for Members and Parish Council representatives in May 2011, joint site visits to similar developments ( Loves Farm and Upton) and a public service workshop in December 2011. As part of their pre-application work the Joint Promoters carried out public consultation on their proposals in October 2011 and also attend the Northstowe Parish Forum, which now meets on a monthly basis.

2.6 A draft planning performance agreement (PPA) setting out principles and a common approach to project management was considered by Northstowe & New Communities Portfolio-Holder in November 2011; this is close to being finalised. A letter, dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011, was issued by the Council outlining matters to be addressed in the forthcoming submissions.

### **3.1 On 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012 two submissions were received**

1. **Development Framework**, effectively a site-wide masterplan, which will include the strategic reserve land. Although not a planning application the Development Framework complies with the policy requirement for a site wide master plan and sets the context for the Phase 1 development.
2. **An outline application** for the first phase comprising:
  - up to 1,500 dwellings (approximately 35% of which are proposed to be affordable);
  - mixed use local centre; with primary school; and sports facilities
  - approximately 3.5ha of employment land; and a household waste recycling centre;
  - associated infrastructure.

3.2 Key changes to the proposals from those in 2008 include the addition of the strategic reserve land on the north side of B1050, a northward shift of the town centre, a redesign of the spine road, and a reduction in the number of local centres.

## 4.0 Forthcoming Consultation and timelines.

4.1 The consultation period for both the Development Framework and the outline application is likely to start on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March and run for 6 weeks until Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April.

4.2 A consultation programme was agreed with the Northstowe Parish Forum in January (attached). In addition to the standard notification process there will be four exhibitions with 'drop in' sessions at Oakington and Longstanton between 13<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> March at which officers and representatives from the Joint promoters will be available to outline and explain the proposals, as well as the processes involved in considering and determining the proposals.

4.3 A formal response on both submissions is scheduled for early May. Subject to timely responses and resolution of outstanding issues it is anticipated that the Development Framework will be considered by the NJDCC in late summer, i.e. prior to any consideration of the Phase 1 application, which is likely to be in the autumn.

4.4 Preliminary pre application discussions on Phase 2 are also expected to start in late summer.

## 5.0 On-going work streams:

5.1 Work continues in a number of areas, outputs from which will inform the consideration of the forthcoming proposals:

- Public services –particularly focusing two community hubs: shared services within the primary school adjacent the local centre, and early delivery of a secondary school, on land adjacent Phase 1 which will accommodate children from Northstowe and Longstanton.
- Energy – a joint study is to review what might be possible for phase 1 within the context of options for site wide provision. Report expected by April.
- Housing and community investment - a feasibility study underway on options for affordable housing and community investment revenue generation. Report expected March.
- Exploring early delivery of retail and employment with local businesses.
- A14 – work continues by DFT with a final report expected in June.
- Viability and S106 obligations – at an early stage with consultants now appointed to focus initially on the methodology.

## **Northstowe Phase 1 application and Development Framework Document consultation process for parish councils and members of the public (the following dates are based on a submission date of 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012)**

### **Week 1 (registration and notification of application)**

- Once the outline application for Phase 1 and the Development Framework Document have been validated they will be uploaded to the Council's website ([www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)).
- Hard copies of the Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement for the Phase 1 application and the Development Plan Document will be sent to the following parish councils (along with CDs and hard copies of other documents as

requested); Bar Hill, Cottenham, Dry Drayton, Girton, Histon/Impington, Lolworth, Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick, Over, Rampton, Swavesey and Willingham.

- Hard copies of all the Northstowe documents will also be sent to Bar Hill, Cottenham, Willingham and Swavesey libraries, as well as the Central Library in Lion Yard.
- An electronic pro-forma, with a link to the Northstowe documents on the Council's website, will be sent to the above parish councils giving them 42 days to comment from 5<sup>th</sup> March.
- Neighbour notification letters will go out to all properties in the villages of Cottenham, Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick, Over, Rampton, Swavesey and Willingham, as well as anyone living outside these villages who commented on the previous applications.
- A press notice will be put in the Cambridge News and site notices will be put up around the site and in the neighbouring villages. The press notice, site notices and neighbour notification letters will all give members of the public 42 days to comment from 5<sup>th</sup> March (though comments can be submitted before then).

### **Week 2 (consultation period formally commences, for 6 weeks – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March)**

- Representations will be accepted either via the post or electronically (e-mail or through the Council's website). The Council will be using the APAS system, which is the system routinely used for receiving comments on all planning applications.
- The Phase 1 application and the Development Framework Document will both be given separate reference numbers on APAS. Documents for both the submissions will be on the same webpage.
- Where possible it will be helpful if comments were made under the relevant reference numbers, though it is acknowledged that there will be some issues that relate to both submissions.

### **Week 3 (public exhibitions)**

- There will be four 'drop in' sessions held during the week commencing Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March (on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> (2pm till 8pm), Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> (2pm till 7pm), Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> (10am till 4pm) and Monday 19<sup>th</sup> (2pm till 8pm)). These 'drop in' sessions will be held at Longstanton (13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>) and Oakington (17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>) and manned by District and County officers, with representatives of the Joint Promoters also attending. Details of the dates, times and venues will be provided on the notification letters and the Council's website.

### **Week 8 (consultation period finishes – Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April)**

- Officers will assess the Development Framework Document and Phase 1 outline application against all relevant National and Local Planning Policies and all material planning considerations, including those raised in the representations from consultees and members of the public.

### **Week 9**

- A response letter will be sent to the applicants outlining any amendments or additional information that may be required. If either submission is amended or additional information is submitted further consultation will be carried out.

The Development Framework Document will be considered by the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee (NJDCC). This will need to happen prior to the consideration of the Phase 1 application, given that it provides the context for the Phase 1

development, and all future applications. Weight will be given to the Development Framework Document through endorsement by the NJDCC.

In addition to this the Northstowe Parish Forum will continue to meet monthly and regular briefings will be arranged for the members of the NJDCC. More information about the regular community engagement activities throughout 2012 will be found on the Northstowe Community Engagement Paper, which is being drafted.